Art. XII.—*Note on the Occurrence of Fossil Bones at Werribee.*

By G. B. Pritchard.

[Read 12th July, 1894.]

A short time ago having heard that some bones had been discovered during the excavation of the drains for the Werribee Sewage Farm, by the Metropolitan Board of Works, I called upon Mr. C. E. Oliver, M.C.E., Superintending Engineer of Sewerage, in whose possession the fossils were, and through his kindness and courtesy I was allowed the privilege of an examination which resulted in their identification. These identifications I now wish to place on record.

Phascolomys pliocenus, McCoy.

The first specimen is the lower jaw of the extinct wombat, *Phascolomys pliocenus, McCoy*, which agreed remarkably well with the admirable figure and description given by Sir F. McCoy in the Prodromus of the Palæontology of Victoria, Decade I., p. 21, plates III., IV., V. This specimen was in an excellent state of preservation, the only flaws being the absence of portions of the ascending rami and the distal ends of the two incisors, the cause being no doubt due to insufficient care being exerted during its excavation. In the Prodromus, this species is recorded from the gold drift of Dunolly, and from the shores of Lake Bullen Merri, Camperdown. In an essay "On the recent Zoology and Palæontology of Victoria," by Sir F. McCoy,* it is further recorded from the red clays of Lake Timboon. By examining the specimens in the National Museum, Melbourne, the following additional localities may be noted:—Limeburners Point, Geelong; Modewarre, Geelong; Bet-Bet, near Avoca; and a half of a lower jaw has been picked up on the beach two miles west of the Werribee River.

? Palorchestes azael, Owen.

The second specimen was in a very fragmentary condition when it came into my hands, having been badly broken by the

* Intercolonial Exhibition Essays, 1866-67, p. 15.

pick; however, as all the fragments appeared to belong to the one bone, an endeavour was made by Mr. T. S. Hall and myself to piece them together, which was, we were glad to find, eventually successful. This proved to be the *tibia* of the gigantic extinct kangaroo, for which the genus *Palorchestes* was founded by Sir Richard Owen. The first specimen which came under the notice of that distinguished authority, was a portion of a skull discovered in 1851, by Dr. Ludwig Becker, "in a bed of yellowish sand and clay, mixed with very small shells, in the Province of Victoria, Australia."

A fragment eight and a half inches in length of the proximal end of a tibia, referred to this genus, is described and figured in the Philosophical Transactions,* and in Owen's "Fossil Mammals of Australia," p. 495, pl. cxxxi., and with this as far as it goes our example agrees accurately, the latter, however, is quite twenty-four inches in length, and is about five inches in circumference at its narrowest part. I refer this example to the above species with but little doubt, as it is the type and only species of the genus, and Mr. R. Lydekker says† it "is the largest known member of the family *(Macropodidæ)*, the length of the entire cranium being estimated at sixteen inches," and on account of the very large size of the skull he further remarks‡ that this "indicates that the largest limb bones probably belongs to that genus."

Judging from the specimens recorded by Sir R. Owen in the works cited above, and by R. Lydekker, in the British Museum Catalogue,§ we are fortunate in possessing such a fine example of this bone.

The exact locality from which the above bones have been procured was given me by Mr. C. E. Oliver, and is the Werribee Sewage Farm, 2 miles 39 chains 87 links on drain 55 east, 3 feet below the surface in a slightly calcareous red sandy clay.

Both specimens are now in the Biological Museum at the University.

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* Phil. Trans., 1876, p. 203, pl. xxiv.

† Brit. Mus. Cat. Fossil Mammalia, part v., p. 237.

‡ *Op. cit.*, p. 239.

§ *Op. cit.*, p. 244.